

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 HA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 MCT-02
/078 W

-----006193 072333Z /70

O R 072238Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9327
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 QUITO 6250

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EC
SUBJECT: FUROR OVER "US INTERVENTION" BEGINS TO DIE DOWN

REF: QUITO 6212

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: TELEVISION APPEARANCES BY PRINCIPALS AND MORE SERIOUS PRESS TREATMENT OF THE ISSUE HAVE HELPED TO DAMPEN THE FUROR OVER PURPORTED US INTERVENTION IN ECUADOR'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. EMBASSY HAS ALSO RECEIVED UNOFFICIAL ASSURANCES FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT IT APPRECIATES EMBASSY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE BILATERAL RELATIONS AND WOULD STRONGLY OPPOSE GROUNDLESS EFFORTS TO SANCTION EMBASSY OFFICIALS. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH THE EMBASSY IS NOT COMMENTING BEYOND ITS OFFICIAL STATEMENT (REFTEL), THE ECUADOREAN POLITICIAN INCLUDED IN PEDRO JOSE ARTETA'S SEPTEMBER 4 DENUNCIATION OF US INTERFERENCE
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IN ECUADOREAN POLITICS HAS TAKEN THE OFFENSIVE IN DENYING THAT CHARGE. MAURICIO DAVALOS, POPULAR DEMOCRACY MEMBER CLAIMED BY ARTETA TO HAVE BEEN HOST OF THE BREAKFAST POLCOUNS SUTTON PURPORTEDLY ATTENDED, APPEARED ON A T.V. INTERVIEW SEPTEMBER 6 AND FLATLY DENIED SUTTON'S INVOLVE-
MENT. DAVALOS NOTED THAT THE ORIGINAL "PICAPIEDRA"
COLUMN CLAIMED THAT SUTTON HAD ARRANGED AND ATTENDED A

BREAKFAST WITH DAVALOS AND DISSIDENT LIBERAL PARTY LEADER FRANCISCO "PANCHO" HUERTA. HE ADMITTED THAT HE HAD MET WITH HUERTA BUT STATED THAT THE MEETING WAS HIS IDEA, THAT HE HAD ARRANGED IT, AND THAT SUTTON WAS NOT INVOLVED IN ANY WAY. IN ANY EVENT, DAVALOS SAID, A DIPLOMAT'S JOB IS TO GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE AND EVENTS IN A COUNTRY RATHER THAN BEING TOTALLY ISOLATED, AND THEREFORE THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH POLITICIAN CONTACTS WITH DIPLOMATS.

4. SEPTEMBER 7 PAPERS REDUCED DRASTICALLY THEIR COVERAGE OF THIS "ISSUE", PLAYING IT AS A MINOR PART OF THE DAY'S STORIES ON POLITICAL EVENTS. PRIMARY MENTION WAS IN CONNECTION WITH REQUEST BY SOME RAUL CLEMENTE HUERTA SPOKESMEN BEFORE THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL (SET) THAT THE SET SEND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AN OFFICIAL REQUEST FOR AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CHARGES OF US EMBASSY INTERVENTION. EL COMERCIO OF QUITO CARRIED THE ONLY EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE SUBJECT, A STRONG DENUNCIATION OF ARTETA AND DEFENSE OF EMBASSY ACTIONS. RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THAT EDITORIAL READ: "HAVING FAILED IN MANY ATTEMPTS (TO DISCREDIT THE RETORNO PROCESS), NOW (SOME) POLITICIANS ARE STAGING PROTESTS OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION BY AN OFFICIAL OF THE EMBASSY OF THE US IN OUR ELECTIONS. BUT WHAT THIS IS REALLY ALL ABOUT IS DIRTY GOSSIP WHICH IS NOTHING HONORABLE. "AN OFFICIAL OF THE MENTIONED EMBASSY CONVERSES WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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FRIENDS AND WITH ECUADOREAN POLITICIANS FROM ONE OR ANOTHER TENDENCY. BASICALLY, THE OFFICIAL IS FULFILLING AN HONEST AND CORRECT MISSION. BUT CERTAIN POLITICIANS HAVE BECOME AUDACIOUS ACCUSERS WITHOUT THE LEAST BASIS FOR TAING THEM SERIOUSLY... "IN THE CURRENT CASE, THE DENUNCIATIONS OF FOREIGN INTERVENTIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR POLITICS ARE SIMPLY RIDICULOUS BUT THEY HAVE CAUSED A SAD LOSS OF TIME IN THE WORK OF (VOTE) SCRUTINY..."

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-----006269 072336Z /70

O R 072238Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9328
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 QUITO 6250

5. AMB. HERNAN VEINTIMILLA, ACTING FOREIGN UNDERSECRETARY GAVE EMBOFF UNOFFICIAL, BUT FIRM, ASSURANCES SEPTEMBER 6 THAT THE MINISTRY WAS FOLLOWING EVENTS CLOSELY AND WOULD BE TOTALLY OPPOSED TO ANY ATTEMPTS ARISING FROM THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL TO HARASS THE EMBASSY. VEINTIMILLA SAID THAT THE MINISTRY IS AWARE OF WHAT CONTACTS EMBASSY OFFICIALS HAVE AND HAS FOUND NOTHING UNTOWARD IN THOSE CONTACTS. HE SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY IS ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN THIS CASE SINCE OFFICIALS THERE KNOW AND APPRECIATE THE WORK OF THE EMBASSY IN IMPROVING BILATERAL RELATIONS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS.

6. OF THE MANY DECLARATIONS OF SOLIDARITY THAT THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED IN LAST FEW DAYS, ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING CAME FROM CID PARTY PRESIDENT JULIO PRADO VALLEJO, WHO CHARACTERIZED THE INTERVENTION CHARGES AS COMPLETELY BASELESS AND RIDICULOUS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT PRADO WAS THE FOREIGN MINISTER WHO DECLARED CONFIDENTIAL

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AMBASSADOR COERR PERSONA NON GRATA IN 1967, AND IS THUS CONSIDERED SOMETHING OF AN EXPERT ON THE QUESTION OF US INTERVENTIONISM.

7. COMMENT: AS THE ARTIFICIAL ISSUE OF US INTERVENTION JOINS A GOOD NUMBER OF SIMILAR ISSUES WHICH HAVE BEEN RAISED IN AN EFFORT TO DERAIL THE RETORNO PROCESS, A NUMBER OF FACTS STAND OUT WHICH ARE REMARKABLE IN THE CONTEXT OF TRADITIONAL US-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE 27 MONTH RETORNO PROCESS HAS BEEN UNDERWAY THAT THE US HAS IN ANY WAY BECOME AN ISSUE IN THE CAMPAIGN. MORE SURPRISINGLY, BOTH POLITICIANS AND THE MEDIA HAVE

COME TO THE DEFENSE OF THE EMBASSY. IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT
PAST ANY ACCUSATION AGAINST THE US, NO MATTER HOW OUTRAGEOUS,
WOULD FIND GENERAL ACCLAIM AND CHARGES OF "CIA INTERFERENCE
IN LOCAL AFFAIRS." NOT ONLY HAVE EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH
POLITICAL FIGURES BEEN STOUTLY DEFENDED, BUT EVEN
THE INSTIGATOR OF THE CHARGES DURING A T.V. INTERVIEW
DENIED THAT HE BELIEVED THE "INTERVENTION" WAS THE WORK
OF THE CIA AND DEFENDED POLCOUNS AS "SIMPLY A DIPLOMAT".
IN THIS RESPECT, THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS ISSUE HAS SERVED
TO UNDERLINE THE BASICALLY HEALTHY STATE OF ECUADOREAN-US
RELATIONS AT THE PRESENT TIME.
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